

# International Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4 April 2006



Mayor's Office, City of Houston

Office of International Affairs & Development

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## Message from the Mayor

April has always been an exciting month here in Houston. We have a wide array of upcoming community, educational, cultural and artistic events; and the Houston International Festival (ifest) is an annual celebration of just how multifaceted our world, and our city, truly is.



Bill White

I would like to invite you to learn more in this month's issue about the Houston International Festival and the seven Mayor's International Affairs & Development Councils who have all recently elected officers. As always, thank you for your feedback and for your support.

**Bill White, Mayor**

## Message from the Director

Each month, we receive numerous messages of encouragement and support from the community:

*"I've missed you all so much. Last summer was truly an unforgettable experience. I've also been able to use my research and policy knowledge for my classes and debate, and have gained a greater appreciation for the intricacies of city politics.... Thank you for the wonderful experience."*



Helen T. Chang

*Anna Valkovich  
Rice University student (former intern)*

We will continue to serve the community with great pride. Thank you.

**Helen T. Chang, Director**

## March 2006 Highlights

### Ambassador Brings Morocco to Houston

As the fourth largest city in the United States with the third largest number of consulates, Houston receives many international dignitaries on a frequent basis. On March 3-4, we were honored to have hosted the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United States, the Honorable Aziz Mekouar.

During his two-day visit to Houston, Ambassador Mekouar not only participated in events organized by our local Moroccan community, but the Ambassador,

#### Did You Know?

With over 30 years of leadership experience in the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation, Ambassador Mekouar previously served as Morocco's ambassador to Italy before assuming his current posting in the United States in June of 2002.

along with Houston Mayor Bill White, City Council Member Adrian Garcia, and U.S. Congressman Al Green, were also guests of honor at the Islamic Society of Greater Houston (ISGH) re-dedication ceremony held on March 3 for its renovated Main Center location. The Main Center location was the first site used by the ISGH when it was established in 1968, and had undergone major remodeling before its official reopening this year. – **By David Chang**



*Ambassador Aziz Mekouar of Morocco to the United States*

### Greece Today: Business and Cultural Connection to Houston

On March 7, the Greek Consulate General in Houston and the Houston World Affairs Council held *Greece Today, Business and Cultural Connection to Houston* featuring Greek Ambassador Alexandros P. Mallias to the United States. Ambassador Mallias outlined the business opportunities that exist between Greece and Texas. His remarks showcased the Greek energy policy in the Balkans and Southeastern

Europe, the Hellenic

investment network, and the position of Greece as a platform for accessing opportunities in the Balkan market.

During Ambassador Mallias' stay in Houston, he delivered speeches at various universities on Greece's foreign policy, the Balkans, Turkey and the European Union, areas which are at the heart of Greece's foreign policy.

– **By Maria Y. Melas**



*Greek Ambassador Alexandros P. Mallias to the United States*

#### Did You Know?

Oil is Greece's most important fuel source, accounting for approximately 63% of total energy consumption in 2003. Oil's market share is declining slowly, as natural gas becomes more important. By 2025, oil is expected to account for 57% of Greece's energy demand.

*Source: <http://www.eia.doe.gov>*

#### Special Thanks

*Article submitted by Maria Y. Melas, Greek Consulate General in Houston.*

## Premier Universities Connected Across the Globe

The economy of the future depends on the investments we make in education today. As a city of international character and momentum, Houston is well on its way to preparing today's youngsters to compete in an increasingly complex world. On March 8, Dr. Joan Y. H. Leung, director of the City University of Hong Kong's International Student Exchange for Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, met with Dr. Ira Colby, dean of the University of Houston's Graduate College of Social Work, during her official visit to the University of Houston to discuss future development of the exchange program between the City University of Hong Kong and the University of Houston.



(From left to right) Dr. Ira Colby, Dr. Joan Y.H. Leung, and Dr. Monit Cheung

### Did You Know?

Currently, the University of Houston is one of the few American educational partners for the City University of Hong Kong. The University of Houston has signed multiple memorandums of understanding with universities in 17 different countries.

"We are very excited about the exchange program we have developed with the University of Houston," said Dr. Leung, who views the Graduate College of Social Work as a springboard for further connections. Facilitated in part by Dr. Monit Cheung, chair of the Graduate College's Children and Families Concentration, the meeting was an affirmation of the decade-long partnership between the University of Houston and the City University of Hong Kong. These two premier universities, though located at a major distance apart, share unique goals of preparing their students for years to come by encouraging international exposure and exchanges. – **By Matthew Shailer**

## Ambassadors Present: Community Counts

Sister Cities of Houston held its first annual *Community Summit* on March 9. The event, co-hosted by the Houston World Affairs Council, featured Ambassadors Kenton Keith and Charles Ray who presented *The Community Counts: Citizen Diplomacy and America's Image in the World*.

"Our visa policy has gone awry and must be fixed. We must return to the days when students came here from abroad, learned, made friends and

returned to their countries with a good feeling about the United States. Goodwill is enhanced by exchanges," said Ambassador Keith. "Government can do only so much," added Ambassador Ray, "Americans must be true examples of our beliefs. We must be informed and educated about the world, as well as other cultures."

– **By Ellen Goldberg**



(From left to right) Amb. Charles Ray, Angelika Schmidt-Lange, Amb. Kenton Keith, Ellen Goldberg, and Addis Johannes

### Did You Know?

From 1992 to 1995, Kenton Keith served as U.S.'s ambassador to the State of Qatar.

Charles A. Ray served as U.S.'s ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 2002 to 2005.

### Special Thanks

Article submitted by Ellen Goldberg, president of the Sister Cities of Houston.



## Qatar Plans for Petroleum Capital to Generate Human Capital

Even though Qatar has only been mentioned recently in international news, this small nation on the southern edge of the Persian Gulf has been undergoing economic and social reforms during the past decade. Like other Persian Gulf countries, Qatar's economy almost entirely revolves around petroleum, natural gas, and energy sectors. As part of the nation's efforts in economic diversification, the Emir of Qatar has designated the Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP) as a home for international technology-based companies, as an incubator for start-up enterprises and as a site for applied research centers.



*Qatar Science & Technology Park model*

### Did You Know?

The QSTP, located within Qatar's only free-trade zone for foreign owned companies, currently houses tenants from *Global Fortune 500* companies such as ExxonMobil, Shell, Total, General Electric, Microsoft, Rolls-Royce, Gartner Lee Limited, and the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company.

On March 9, the QSTP vision was brought to the Greater Houston Partnership as Dr. Eulian Roberts, chief executive of the QSTP, Mr. Khalid Mannai, member of the QSTP Board of Governors, and other members of the QSTP delegation gave a briefing on the science park. Located in the nation's capital of Doha, the QSTP is a multi-phase project that will emphasize development on environmental technology, IT, healthcare, gas, petrochemicals, water technology, and other sectors. – **By David Chang**

## U.S. and Europe: A Transatlantic Drift

Dr. Geir Lundestad, director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute in Oslo, Norway, spoke at a luncheon hosted by the Norwegian Consulate General in Houston on March 15. This longstanding expert on transatlantic relations has been director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute since 1990, and helps assist the Norwegian Nobel Committee in selecting the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Dr. Lundestad has been a research fellow at Harvard University and the Woodrow Wilson Center.



*Dr. Geir Lundestad*

### Did You Know?

- EU-based companies are the largest foreign investors in 45 of the 50 U.S. states and are ranked second in the other five.
- The \$19.2 billion of U.S. investment in the Netherlands in 2003 nearly equaled U.S. investment in all of Asia (\$22.4 billion).
- European investment just in the State of Texas was over \$50 billion in 2002.

*Source: Center for Transatlantic Relations*

This occasion was the first visit to Texas of Dr. Lundestad who noted that "this state is of increasing importance in world politics." The topic of Dr. Lundestad's speech was *The U.S. and Europe: A Transatlantic Drift* and his comments covered the new phase of American and European relations after the Iraq war. While he addressed some governmental policy differences, he concluded by saying "there will be no divorce between America and Europe because of the common culture and the need for each other in the face of new threats." – **By MaryJane Wakefield**

## Upcoming Major Events

### International Education Conference Highlights Awareness of Global Health and Pandemics

The third annual North Harris Montgomery Community College District International Education Conference titled *Global Health – Fear and Hope* will be held on April 7 at Cy-Fair College.

The conference features Ambassador Cresencio Arcos, director of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's International Affairs, who will give the opening address under the theme *Department of Homeland Security and International Education*. Dr. Yanzhong Huang, director of the Seton Hall University Center's Global Health Studies, will give the keynote address titled *Pandemic Flu and its Security Implications* and will focus on infectious diseases such as the avian flu. For more information, contact 832-813-6814.

– By Kelly Ann Norton

#### Did You Know?

Cy-Fair College is the fifth largest college in the North Harris Montgomery Community College District. Cy-Fair College has two locations – the Fairbanks Center and the Cy-Fair College campus.

#### Special Thanks

Article submitted by Kelly Ann Norton, media relations program coordinator of Cy-Fair College.

## A Night of Turkish Sufi

American Turkish Association of Houston will present a night of Turkish Sufi music, poetry, dance and images on April 8 at the Jewish Community Center Kaplan Theatre.

Latif Bolat, a Turkish Mystic Sufi musician, singer and composer, will present music, poetry, Sufi mystic stories and images from the ancient land of Turkey. Throughout the program, Latif Bolat will recite devotional poetry from 13th Century Sufi poets *Yunus Emre* and *Rumi*, and will show images of Turkish people and sacred places from the land of Anatolia. Turkish instruments which frequently accompany musicians include frame drum, ney flute, kanun, violin and oud. For more information, e-mail natalienmk@yahoo.com. – By Natalie M. Kassenyeva

#### Special Thanks

Submitted by Natalie M. Kassenyeva, American Turkish Association of Houston.

#### Did You Know?

The U.S.-Turkey friendship dates to the late 18th century and was officially sealed by a treaty in 1830. The present close relationship began with the agreement of July 12, 1947, which implemented the Truman Doctrine.

Source: <http://www.state.gov>

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## Houston International Festival Salutes Tropical Paradise

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April brings a feel of Jamaica to Houston as we salute Jamaica and shed light into its culture for this year's International Festival in downtown on April 22-23 and 29-30. Houston International Festival coordinates and works closely with various organizations in Houston that focus on creating international trade and culture bonds with other countries.

The array of events includes world-class performances, arts and crafts exhibitions featuring over 400 shops and foods from all over the world. There are eight stages situated around downtown where performances will take place. New to the Festival is Wordstock Café that celebrates authors, songwriters, and artisans. This cultural zone offers entertainment in a variety of forms from theater and poetry to prose. For more information, visit [www.ifest.org](http://www.ifest.org)

– By **Tiffany Ching**

### Did You Know?

The Houston Festival Foundation, Inc. was established in 1971 and is the muscle behind this great event. In 1971, Main Street 1 was the name of a new downtown arts happening—the small arts celebration that grew and evolved into today's Houston International Festival. Located on Main Street near Foley's, the event site was only two blocks in size. It took the authority of then-Mayor Louie Welch to close the streets for one weekend so the party could start.

Source: <http://www.ifest.org>

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## Learn “How to Do Business in China”

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Organized by the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S.-China Federal Association of Business Councils and MetroBank, the *2006 Sino-U.S. Small Business Development Forum & Expo* will take place at the Marriott Houston Westchase Hotel on April 26-28. The event is expected to draw more than 500 people, including small businesses and government leaders from both the U.S. and China. While the Forum will give businesses the opportunity to network and build relationships with one another, the Expo will give companies the chance to showcase their products and services.

Small businesses will also have an opportunity to learn rules and regulations on how to partner with Chinese businesses as well as a presentation on the business culture. For more information, contact 713-988-1181. – By **Vidi Jimenez**

### Did You Know?

MetroBank was established in 1987 to better assist the Asian and Hispanic communities with their banking needs. Today, MetroBank is one of the top independent banks in the greater Houston area.

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## U.S.-Central America Free Trade Agreement Conference

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On April 20-21, the U.S. Department of Commerce will hold a two-day conference: *Expanding the Houston and Central America Business Connection*. Among the many speakers are Secretary Carlos Gutierrez of the U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady. Central America and the Dominican Republic are the second largest export market in Latin America behind Mexico. With the recent passage of the Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA/DR) by the United States Congress, Houston is poised to truly become the gateway to the Americas.

With the clear benefits to Texas companies of North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the implementation of CAFTA/DR will further solidify Houston's key role in integrating our economy with our neighbors to the south. Join Houston business leaders, the U.S. Department of Commerce and senior commercial officers from the region as they discuss business opportunities available to Houston companies. For more information, contact 281-449-9406.

Source: <http://www.export.gov>

### Did You Know?

CAFTA-DR includes seven signatories: the United States, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The U.S. Congress approved the CAFTA-DR in July 2005 and the President signed it into law on August 2, 2005. El Salvador is the first country in which the agreement has entered into force, which took effect on March 1, 2006. The U.S. Government expects to be able to bring additional CAFTA-DR partners into the agreement soon.

Source: <http://www.export.gov>

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## President of Guyana Addresses the First Annual International Trade Night in Houston

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On April 22, Houston will pay homage to the international partnerships that help insure continuing vibrant and prosperous commerce with the first annual *International Trade Night*. Hosted by the Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce International Trade Division, the event features keynote speaker President Bharrat Jagdeo of Guyana.

The *International Trade Night* will offer a wide array of activities and opportunities to attendees, providing a silent auction, dancing, fine dining and an awards ceremony. The Chamber will present two awards: the International Business Achievement and the International Person-of-the-Year, accolades that reflect the emphasis that Houston places on international involvement. It is their hope that as industry and city leaders meet and mingle new partnerships can be formed. The event will be held at the Houston Club. For more information, call 713-522-9745. – **By Matthew Shailer**

### Did You Know?

Guyana has been pursuing foreign investment over the past few years, especially in the food, energy and information technology sectors. By targeting specific fields of investment and providing huge tax incentives, Guyana hopes to bring the international market to its doorstep. Last August, Guyana hosted a trade fair in New York City to promote a better climate for investment.

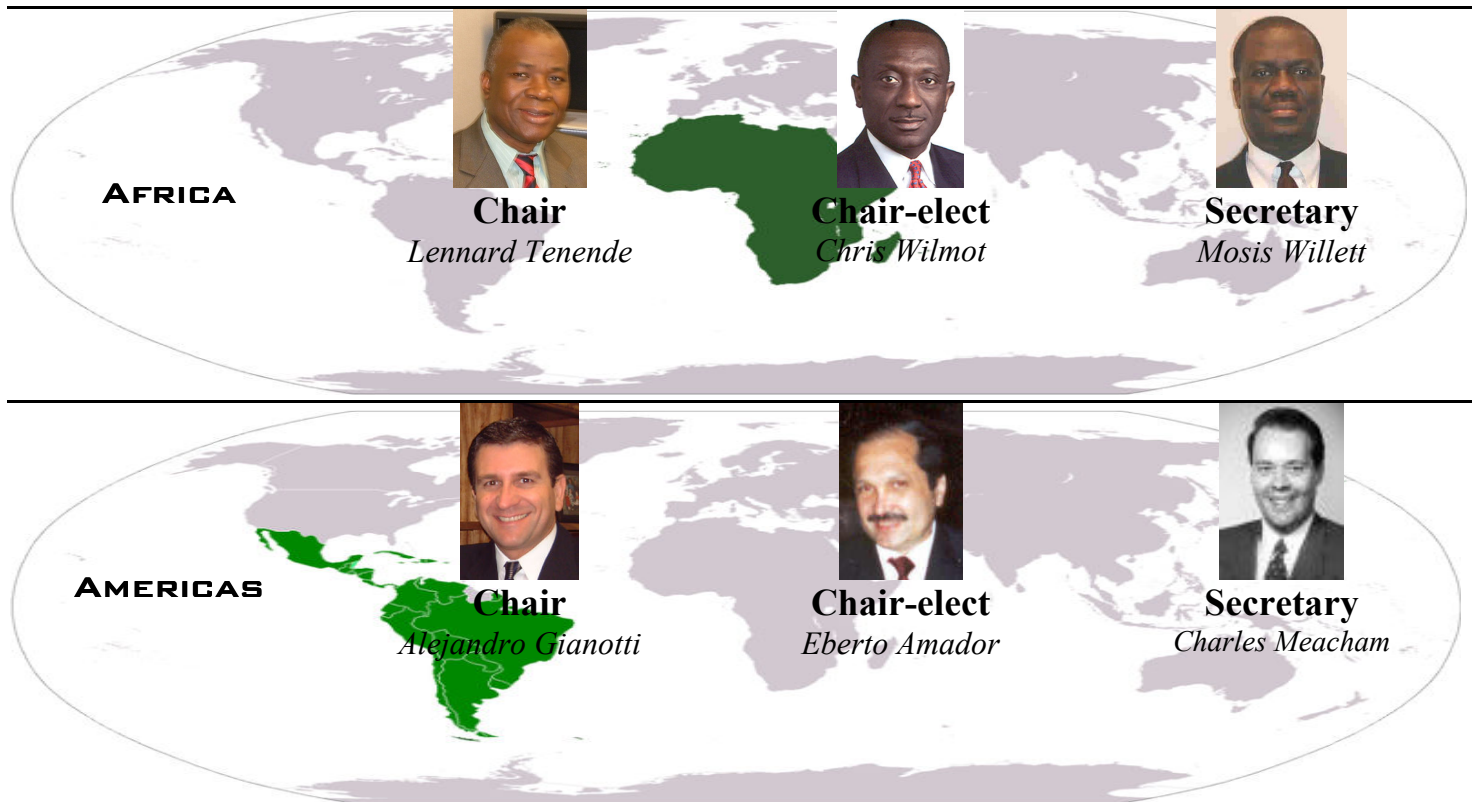
Source: <http://www.goinvest.gov.gy>

## Special Announcement

### Mayor's International Affairs & Development Council (MIADC)

Beginning the week of March 10, the Mayor's International Affairs & Development Councils (MIADC) held their first meetings and each Council elected their respective officers. Established in December of 2005 after more than a year's time in preparation, the MIADC aims to expand channels for constructive dialogue between our city's thriving international communities and the city leaders. The MIADC is subdivided into seven major international regions of the world, representing: Africa, the Americas, Asia-Australia, Canada, MENA, and South Asia.

Each Council's distinct agendas, goals and projects will be determined by respective members of each Council. During the inaugural meetings in early March, which were limited to voting MIADC members only, each Council elected their chairperson, chairperson-elect, and secretary, shown by region below:
















## Special Announcement

### Mayor's International Affairs & Development Council (MIADC)

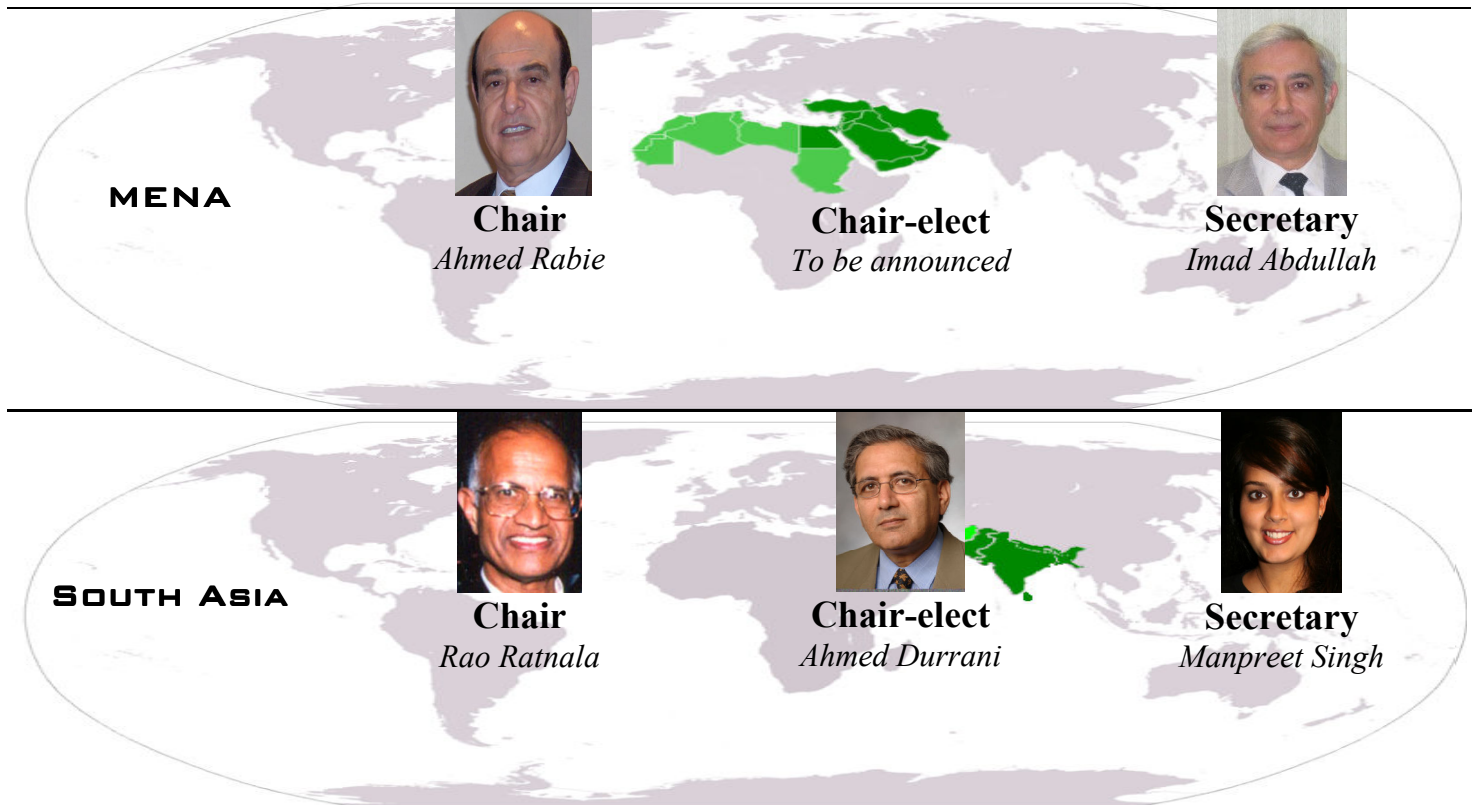
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 <p><b>ASIA- AUSTRALIA</b></p>	 <p><b>Chair</b> <i>Alexander Chae</i></p>	 <p><b>Chair-elect</b> <i>Glen Gondo</i></p>	 <p><b>Secretary</b> <i>Linda Toyota</i></p>
 <p><b>CANADA</b></p>	 <p><b>Chair</b> <i>Pauline Rosenau</i></p>	<p><b>Chair-elect</b> <i>To be announced</i></p>	 <p><b>Secretary</b> <i>Charlene Ripley</i></p>
 <p><b>EUROPE</b></p>	 <p><b>Chair</b> <i>Cheryl May</i></p>	 <p><b>Chair-elect</b> <i>Paul Clemenceau</i></p>	 <p><b>Secretary</b> <i>James Prappas</i></p>

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## Special Announcement

### Mayor's International Affairs & Development Council (MIADC)



The next step for the MIADC will be the designation of the executive council, which will serve as a coordinating body for all seven MIADCs. In addition to pursuing the unique agenda of each MIADC, all seven MIADCs will have the primary goal of working with Mayor Bill White to achieve *One City, One Future*, and to establish Houston as an economically expansive, culturally vibrant, and renowned city with a broad international vision.

As the MIADC continues their efforts, the International Newsletter will profile each region, its officers and its latest activities, beginning with the May issue. Join us in welcoming these elected officers and get to know these distinguished individuals who devote their time and energy to the advancement of Houston on the international scene.

For more information, contact Helen T. Chang, director of the Mayor's Office of International Affairs & Development at 713-247-3595 or [helen.chang@cityofhouston.net](mailto:helen.chang@cityofhouston.net).

*One City One Future*

## Sister City Spotlight – Luanda *former Loanda*

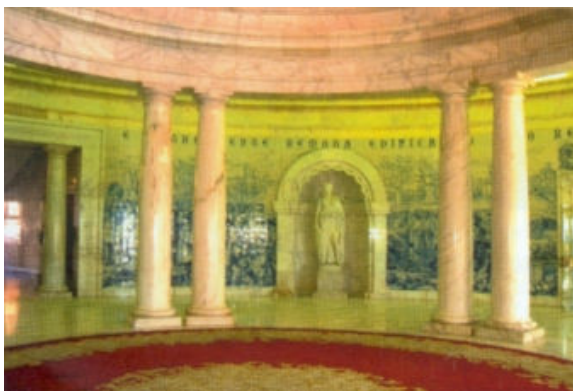
*This month the International Newsletter will continue to showcase each one of Houston's 16 sister cities around the globe with a closer look at each distinctive locale. This month we feature Luanda, Angola.*

Houston's sister city since 2003, Luanda is a booming city of four and a half million people, making it the largest city in Angola. As the capital of Angola, Luanda is the administrative center of the country, as well as being the second largest port. Luanda is also the seat of a Roman Catholic archbishop.

A former Portuguese colony, Luanda has been throughout its history an important port. Prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, Luanda was known among the native African population as Loanda, meaning "flat land." Unfortunately, there was no water supply until 1889 when an aqueduct was opened providing a reliable water supply for the city. In the 1950s, a rise in coffee price allowed for spectacular growth in the city. Angola gained its independence from Portugal in 1975.



*Luanda, Angola*



*Luanda continues to flourish and is known as "the Paris of Africa" as it was affectionately called in the 1872 Report of the National Ultramarine Bank.*

Houston's business ties to Angola are strong. Five Houston companies have subsidiary offices in Angola, and one Angolan-owned company has offices in Houston. Angola is one of Houston's top 3 trading partners in West Africa. In 2004, seaborne trade with Angola was valued at more than \$705 million, and air cargo trade was valued at more than \$38.3 million.

The Houston-Luanda Sister City Association has previously coordinated donations of medicine, medical supplies and school supplies to Luanda. The Association hosts cultural events throughout the year. For more information on the association and their activities, please contact the Houston International Protocol Alliance at 713-227-3395. – **By Alma D. Maldonado**

### Did You Know?

The wooden masks and sculptures of Angola are more than art. They play an important role in cultural rituals, representing life and death, the passage from childhood to adulthood, and the celebration of a new harvest.

Source: <http://www.angola.org/culture>

### Special Thanks

*Article submitted by Alma D. Maldonado, Houston International Protocol Alliance.*



## Meet the Consular Corps in Houston

# Italy *Italia*

*This month we go to a country with dreamy light and sumptuous landscapes to speak with the Honorable Cristiano Maggipinto, Italian Consul General in Houston, to discuss everything from port partnership to technology.*



Consul General  
Cristiano Maggipinto

Although only in Houston for six weeks by the time this interview took place, it was clear that Italian Consul General Cristiano Maggipinto had already made himself completely at home. Such a brief time and yet the palpable sense of passion and energy he brings to the conversation as well as the constructive outlook he offers

to Consular affairs is best characterized, said one of his assistants, as “exhilarating!”

For someone who was motivated into foreign service by his experiences growing up in a bucolic town in Italy, life in Houston and the three other states the Consulate serves—Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana—must seem a world away. “Culture in Houston is extremely high-end,” Consul General Maggipinto asserts and points to Houston’s opera, symphony, jazz clubs, fine dining experiences, and cinema options as examples.

The Italian Consulate has been Houston’s valued partner in improving cultural ties and encouraging trade since the Consulate’s founding in 1985. Consul General Maggipinto points out that Italy is now the Port of Houston’s second largest trading partner in terms of volume, and, in terms of value, the first of European nations. Several large Italian companies have subsidiaries in the Houston area, including some like Augusta Bella, that are major players within the aerospace industry and have close ties to the military and to NASA. According to the Consul General, the medical center in Houston is home to more than 100

Italian doctors and is a prime example of the many subtle ways in which our region is linked to Italy.



Map of Italy

In addition to his many administrative tasks at the Italian Consulate, Consul General Maggipinto draws upon the depth of experience in international commerce he had built up during assignments to Berlin, Tel Aviv, and Rome to best address the needs of Italian businesses in Houston. To date there have been a multitude of high-level interactions between Houston and Italy, with more planned for the future. To name just a few, Consul General Maggipinto anticipates some of this upcoming year’s events to highlight Italy’s aeronautical sector, fashion industry, and, as a cultural homage, next autumn a Fellini movie showcase. Consul General Maggipinto’s immediate goal is to improve Italy’s recognition as a center for technology and a complementary partner for Houston industries. — **By Matthew Shailer**



## International Hub: James A. Baker III Institute

Since its founding in 1993, the Baker Institute, a public policy think tank housed at Rice University, has brought a new and distinctive voice to the U.S.'s national and international public policy dialogue. Strictly nonpartisan and committed to intellectual excellence, the Institute is dedicated to bridging the divide between the worlds of action and ideas as envisioned by its founder, Secretary James A. Baker, III.

Located in the energy capital of the world, the Institute's well-established energy program researches topics such as regional studies, new technologies and market reform. Additionally, the Institute's Energy Forum is the nation's leading university-based research program on geopolitical issues; and the Institute provides analysis and policy recommendations that are disseminated to energy companies in Houston. Interested corporations are allowed to participate directly in the Institute's research programs and related events.

The Institute's Transnational China Project is a newly endowed program which examines the economic and cultural factors shaping China's emerging middle class. International trade will be a key focus. Other areas of the Institute's research that are particularly relevant to international business are the U.S.-Mexico Border Project which will deal with a myriad of public policy challenges related to trans-border issues, and the America's Project which is a collaborative effort with the Organization of American States that will bring together young Latin American leaders to discuss important hemispheric issues.

Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, the Institute's founding director and former ambassador to Israel and Syria, is extremely active in the areas of conflict resolution and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Ambassador Djerejian recently chaired a congressionally mandated committee on U.S. public diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim world, and

currently chairs an ongoing panel on the implementation of the Roadmap to Peace in Israeli and Palestinian territories.



*Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, Founding Director*

"The Institute provides substantive advice on foreign policy issues which is very helpful to the strategic planning of the business community in Houston. Our success in attracting prominent national and international foreign leaders to speak at the Institute helps showcase Houston as an international city," said Djerejian.

Speakers at the Institute have included Nelson Mandela, Vladimir Putin, King Abdullah II of Jordan, Colin Powell, President Jimmy Carter, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Al-Saud, Shimon Peres and Alan Greenspan. This spring, Karen Hughes, undersecretary of the State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, will be visiting the Institute for a lecture.

Ongoing Institute programs will continue in the fields of space, nanotechnology, health (a collaborative effort with the Texas Medical Center), and tax policy. These research results are widely quoted and used in the mass media. – **MaryJane Wakefield**

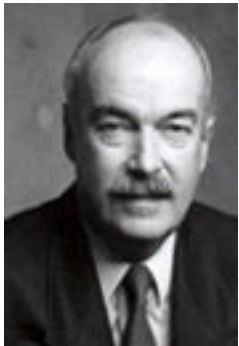
### Did You Know?

All of the Institute's scholars are well known experts in their field. Amy Jaffe, the Institute's director of the Energy Program and widely recognized in Houston's business community, was just named one of the "Best and Brightest" in *Esquire Magazine's* annual article covering the brightest minds in the country.

## The Global Bridge: The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

*Each month the International Newsletter will feature a section “The Global Bridge” introducing the chambers of commerce in Houston dedicated to promoting Houston’s international image.*

An aggregator of information and resources, as well as a promoter of interests related to the Hispanic community both locally and nationwide, the mission of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is to be the catalyst in the growth of Houston by empowering the Hispanic community to excel in the economic mainstream. The Chamber is a catalyst for businesses and professionals to create and develop resources needed to build profitable and dynamic businesses.



*George Donnelly,  
president of the  
Houston Hispanic  
Chamber of  
Commerce*

The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was founded on March 2, 1977, by a group of prominent Hispanic businesspeople. The Chamber's leadership is comprised of successful businesspeople and community leaders that devise the chamber's strategy and provide a hands-on approach to the business community's needs. Any company or individual that resides in the Houston area may benefit from the Chamber's work.

The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has partnerships with organizations and companies that leverage existing resources. Due to tremendous growth in recent years, the Chamber is focusing its efforts on increasing and developing better services for its membership, enhancing the infrastructure of the Chamber, consolidating relationships with other Hispanic business organizations and expanding the programs and services that are related to international opportunities. The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides opportunities for individuals and companies to join the Chamber at different financial levels. The Chamber executes its programs with the collaborative efforts of staff, volunteers, and various

committees, which allow the corporate and general membership to actively participate in strategic planning for the Chamber. Committee involvement provides members an opportunity to see tangible benefits from their investment in the Chamber both in their businesses and in the community. The Chamber's committees include: Ambassadors, Business Development, Corporate Funding, Latina Roundtable International, Membership, Professional Services, and Puerto Rican Business and Professional committees.

### **The Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce acts as an effective business resource by:**

- Creating local, national and international business opportunities for newcomers and members
- Assisting members with procurement opportunities
- Organizing and sponsoring educational seminars and networking events such as membership orientations, breakfast meetings and after-hour mixers
- Developing dialogue with elected officials and corporations to advocate on behalf of the members
- Serving as mentors to Hispanic professionals and business owners
- Providing updated demographic statistics and substantial Hispanic business and community information
- Referring members to the proper sources of business and information

**– By Angelica Lopez**

### *Special Thanks*

*Article submitted by Angelica Lopez,  
marketing coordinator of the Houston  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.*

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## International Frontier – Joel A. Bartsch

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*Every month we focus on a Houstonian who has made an indelible mark on our city through outstanding contributions and services to the growth of Houston as an international city.*



Joel A. Bartsch

A centerpiece of the Houston Museum District, the Houston Museum of Natural Science (MNS) welcomes more than 2 million visitors each year and is officially one of the nation's most heavily attended museums. In addition to the creation of its own exhibits like *Kremlin Gold: 1000 Years of Russian Gems and Jewels*, the

Museum hosts a great variety of significant traveling exhibits from all over the world.

Guiding this international institution is the Museum's President, Joel Bartsch, a native Texan and longtime Houstonian. Currently a Ph.D. candidate at Rice University, Bartsch obtained a Bachelor of Arts from Concordia University and a Master of Arts from Rice. His 24-year museum career has included positions at the Colorado School of Mines, the Texas Memorial Museum in Austin and Lyman Museum in Hilo, Hawaii. Most recently, he held the position of curator of gems and minerals at the MNS.

In his 15 years of service at the MNS, Bartsch has also played a key role as project manager for several of the Museum's temporary exhibitions and permanent exhibit halls. His goal for the Museum is for it to be a "place where Houstonians, as well as visitors from around the world—many languages are heard in our lobby—can marvel at new discoveries and learn at the same time." To obtain these stimulating exhibitions, Bartsch travels the world exploring new subjects. A new special exhibition, *The Royal Tombs of Ur: Ancient Treasures from Modern Iraq*, presents stunning jewels, weapons and

gilt objects which were uncovered in the 1920's by British archaeologist C. Leonard Woolley. A cradle of civilization, the Sumerians of Ur invented mathematics, astronomy, writing, the wheel and the sail. Says Bartsch, "This exhibit is an extraordinary chance to view the magnificent art and fascinating culture of the world's first civilization."

Bartsch's enthusiasm about past global exhibits is contagious. *Tibet: Treasures from the Roof of the World*, was a favorite of Bartsch's as "it provided visitors a rare opportunity to experience Tibetan culture in a new way—through the finest quality art made for its most important leaders, centuries of Dalai Lamas and Tibetan nobility." A contrasting exhibit, the *Dead Sea Scrolls* focused on scrolls hidden for almost 2,000 years, and was widely regarded as the greatest archaeological find of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Discovered by a young Bedouin goat herder and his companion in a cave near the Dead Sea, these "scrolls are priceless treasures—not gold or jewels—but powerful words scribed two millennia ago in the desert of the Holy Land," says Bartsch.

One of Bartsch's greatest challenges was the management of the major renovation of the world renowned Weiss Energy Hall, and according to him, "our goal was to keep Weiss Energy Hall on the cutting edge. Everything in the exhibit is state-of-the-art, from the new energy technologies featured to the computer interactives visitors used during their visit." Oil and gas sponsors from all over the globe supported this project, including Saudi Aramco and British Petroleum. Houston is clearly lucky to have this cultural steward who summarizes his job description as "the opportunity to explore the incredible every day. I am in the unique position of being able to learn for a living—I can't think of anything I would enjoy more."

– By MaryJane Wakefield

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## International Houston: Opportunities and Resources

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*This issue, "International Houston: Opportunities and Resources" will continue to provide information on a wide variety of global opportunities as well as international community resources.*

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### **Southeast Asian Student Affected by Katrina Scholarships**

Deadline of Nominations: April 7, 2006

A national organization is providing scholarships to Southeast Asian American students who resided in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. This scholarship is for new college students of Southeast Asian heritage who lived in Mississippi, Alabama, or Louisiana and were adversely affected by Katrina. Scholarships are for students entering any accredited two-year or four-year college (including vocational or technical training) or university in Fall 2006. For more information, visit <http://asu.edu>.

### **Composition Prize for Young Composers**

Deadline: April 15, 2006

Foundation for Modern Music announced its first annual Composition Prize for Young Composers in Honor of Robert Avalon. The competition is open to composers of any nationality who currently reside in the greater Houston area and who were born on or after April 15, 1981. For more information, contact 713-529-3928.

### **2006-2007 Asian Chamber of Commerce Scholarships**

Deadline: May 5, 2006

The Asian Chamber of Commerce and the Houston Community College Foundation announce \$1,000 scholarship availabilities. For more information, visit [www.hccs.edu/students/financialaid/internal.html](http://www.hccs.edu/students/financialaid/internal.html)

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**Next Submission Deadline:  
April 20, 2006**



## April – 2006 Event Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Venue/Contact
April 1,2	3:00pm	Asia Society Texas: The Shanghai String Quartet in Concert	Venue: The Strand Theater, Galveston Contact: 713-439-0051
April 1	9:00am-11:00am	Houston Hua Xia Chinese School: College Admission Conference	Venue: Chinese Community Center Contact: 713-271-6100
April 2-9	--	Asia Society Texas: Asia House Japan Trip Spring	Venue: Japan Contact: 713-439-0051
April 2-12	--	The U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Liaison Office in Tripoli, Libya: Tripoli International Trade Fair	Venue: Tripoli, Libya Contact: 202-797-2340
April 3	2:00pm-4:00pm	Greater Houston Partnership: Exclusive Texas Tax Reform Commission Briefing	Venue: Hyatt Regency Hotel Contact: 713-844-3659
April 4	6:00pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Three Cups of Tea, One Man's Unlikely Journey Through Pakistan	Venue: The Junior League Contact: 713-522-7811
April 5	4:30pm-6:00pm	The Asian Chamber of Commerce: Port of Houston Authority Small Business Networking Event	Venue: Port of Houston Executive Building Contact: 713-670-2588
April 6	6:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: The Sixth Biennial Eleanor and Frank Freed Lecture – A Geometry of Playfulness	Venue: Brown Auditorium Theater Contact: 713-639-7300
April 6	11:30am	Houston World Affairs Council: Lights and Shadows of Democracy in Bolivia	Venue: Westin Gallia Hotel Contact: 713-522-7811
April 6	11:30am-1:30pm	Greater Houston Partnership: Professional Services Council Networking Luncheon	Venue: Renaissance Houston Hotel Contact: 713-844-3600
April 6	11:45am	Greater Houston Partnership: Lunch and Learn, A Cold Call Workshop	Venue: GHP (1200 Smith) Contact: 713-844-3693
April 6	5:45pm	The Asian Chamber of Commerce: Chamber Unite for Super Networking Event	Venue: 713 Restaurant & Lounge Contact: 713-807-1133
April 7	7:15am-9:00am	Houston Technology Center: Technology Champions Meeting	Venue: HTC (410 Pierce) Contact: 713-658-1750
April 7	8:00am-3:00pm	North Harris Montgomery Community College District: International Education Conference, Global Health – Fear and Hope	Venue: Cy-Fair College Contact: 832-813-6814
April 8	8:00am-3:00pm	Hispanic Women in Leadership: Latinas in Motion Conference	Venue: 50 Waugh Drive Contact: 832-689-7119
April 8	8:00pm	American Turkish Association: Latif Bolat Ensemble	Venue: The Jewish Community Center Contact: 281-733-1276

April 8	7:00pm	Arab American Medical Association: Biennial Award Gala	Venue:	InterContinental Hotel
			Contact:	713-524-4267
April 8-9	10:00am	Japan-America Society of Houston: 13 <sup>th</sup> Houston Japan Festival	Venue:	Hermann Park
			Contact:	713-963-0121
April 8,9	5:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: Lecture – Secret Message of Faith	Venue:	Brown Auditorium Theater
			Contact:	713-639-7300
April 11	11:30am	Houston World Affairs Council: Gassing Up, Meeting U.S. Natural Gas Needs Through LNG Imports	Venue:	Hyatt Regency Hotel
			Contact:	713-522-7811
April 11	6:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: Lecture – Identity and the Visual	Venue:	Brown Auditorium Theater
			Contact:	713-639-7300
April 12	6:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: 2006 Dance Salad Festival	Venue:	Brown Auditorium Theater
			Contact:	713-639-7300
April 12	11:30am-1:15pm	The Asian Chamber of Commerce: Monthly Luncheon	Venue:	Westin Galleria Hotel
			Contact:	713-782-7222
April 13	8:30am	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Become a Master at Networking	Venue:	DeVry University
			Contact:	713-353-8240
April 13-15	7:30pm	Asian Society Texas: Dance Salad Festival	Venue:	Wortham Center
			Contact:	713-315-2525
April 14	--	City of Houston Mayor's Office: Delegation led by Liaoning Provincial Economic Commission	Venue:	--
			Contact:	Helen T. Chang 713-247-3595
April 18-19	--	U.S. Export Assistance Center: Essentials of U.S. Export Controls	Venue:	Wyndham Greenspoint North Houston
			Contact:	281-449-9402
April 19	11:30am-1:30pm	Greater Houston Partnership: April Quarterly Meeting	Venue:	Hyatt Regency Hotel
			Contact:	713-844-3682
April 19	6:00pm	Houston World Affairs Council: The Case for Goliath, A Conversation with Michael Mandelbaum	Venue:	Westin Oaks Hotel
			Contact:	713-522-7811
April 20	7:15am-9:00am	Houston Technology Center: Venture Capital Trends in Texas	Venue:	HTC
			Contact:	713-658-1750
April 20	7:00pm-9:30pm	Youth Leadership Council: YLC's Leadership Awards	Venue:	Ocean Palace Restaurant
			Contact:	832-603-1572
April 20	6:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: Artist Lecture - A Sense of Place featuring Joseph Havel	Venue:	Brown Auditorium Theater
			Contact:	713-639-7300
April 20-21	8:30am	U.S. Department of Commerce: CAFTA Summit – Expanding the Houston and Central America Business Connection	Venue:	Doubletree Hotel Downtown
			Contact:	713-844-3600
April 22-23	11:00am-8:00pm	Houston International Festival Celebrating Jamaica	Venue:	Downtown Houston
			Contact:	713-654-8808

April 22	6:00pm	Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce: International Trade Night	Venue: Houston Club Contact: 713-522-9745
April 23	2:00pm	Museum of Fine Arts: the 13 <sup>th</sup> Annual Asia Society Texas/MFAH Lecture on Asian Art	Venue: Brown Auditorium Theater Contact: 713-639-7300
April 22-30	--	Taiwan Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation: Journey to the West on the Silk Road Photo Exhibition	Venue: Chinese Culture Center Contact: 713-789-4995
April 22	6:30pm	Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce: 1 <sup>st</sup> Annual International Trade Night	Venue: Houston Club Contact: 713-522-9745
April 24-28	8:00am-5:00pm	The Grant Institute: Certificate in Professional Program Development and Grant Communication	Venue: University of Houston Contact: 213-817-5308
April 24	11:00am	Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: Expo Comida Latina Texas	Venue: George R. Brown Convention Center Contact: www.expo-comida-latina.com
April 26-28	8:00am-5:00pm	U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. China Federal Association of Business Councils and MetroBank: Promoting Small Business Between U.S. and China SINO-US Small Business Development Forum & Expo	Venue: Marriott Houston Contact: Westchase 713-988-1186
April 27	8:30am	U.S. Export Assistance Center: Doing Business with Israel	Venue: TBD Contact: 281-449-9417
April 27	3:30pm-6:00pm	GeoTech Engineering and Testing: City of Bellaire Presents Foundation Design, Geotechnical and Forensic Evaluation of Custom Homes in Houston	Venue: Bellaire City Hall Contact: 713-699-4000
April 27	5:30pm-7:30pm	Houston Technology Center: HTC Mixer	Venue: TBD Contact: 713-658-1750
April 27	6:00pm	Houston World Affairs Council: Revolution in Orange, the Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough	Venue: Westin Oaks Hotel Contact: 713-522-7811
April 28	11:00am	The Children's Assessment Center: 7 <sup>th</sup> Annual Spirit of Spring Luncheon & Fashion Show	Venue: River Oaks Country Club Contact: 713-986-3300
April 28	TBD	Asian Chamber of Commerce: 11 <sup>th</sup> Annual Gala	Venue: Westin Galleria Hotel Contact: 713-782-7222
April 28	8:30am-1:30pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: United... In Business and Culture	Venue: Westin Oaks Hotel Contact: 713-782-7222
April 29	8:30am-1:30pm	Asian Chamber of Commerce: Texas Federation of Asian American Chamber of Commerce Business Symposium	Venue: TBD Contact: 713-782-7222

*We have one simple goal: to promote Houston as a renowned international city.*

The contents are intended for general information purposes only.